

Amendments to the Drawings:

Fig. 4 has been amended to add the label "Prior Art" as requested by the Examiner.

Attachment: Annotated Sheet Showing Changes
Replacement Sheet

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 4 has been amended to add the label "Prior Art" as requested by the Examiner.

Submitted herewith are a corrected sheet of formal drawing which incorporates the amendment and an annotated sheet showing the changes made thereto.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendment to Fig. 4 be approved and entered, and that the Examiner's objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-22 have been canceled, and new claims 23-29 have been added based on the subject matter of now canceled claims 1, 9, 11, 15 and 19-21, respectively. See also Fig. 2 and the disclosure in the specification at page 11, line 18 to page 13, line 3.

In addition, new claim 30 has been prepared to recite features of the light source section 13' shown in Fig. 2. See also page 12, line 13 to page 13, line 3.

New claim 31 has been prepared to recite the feature of the present invention whereby the semiconductor laser diodes emit visible light band lasers, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 19, lines 6-17.

New claims 32 and 35 have been prepared to recite features of the light source section 13'' shown in Fig. 3.

New claims 33 and 34 correspond to the subject matter of claims 28 and 29 depending from claim 32.

And new claim 36 has been prepared to recite the feature of the present invention whereby the semiconductor laser diodes emit laser light including at least one of an ultraviolet light, a near infrared light and a visible light, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 19, lines 6-17.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that new claims 23-36 be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-4, 7-10 and 13-18 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by US 2002/0030884 ("Engelhardt et al"); and claims 5, 6, 11, 12 and 19-22 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Engelhardt et al and USP 6,423,956 ("Mandella et al"). These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to new claims 23-36.

According to the present invention as recited in new independent claim 23, a laser scanning microscope is provided which comprises a light source section which emits a laser beam and a scanning optical system which scans the laser beam from the light source section on a sample. As recited in new independent claim 23, the light source section comprises a first semiconductor laser diode and a first optical fiber which leads the laser beam from the semiconductor laser diode to the scanning optical system, and the light source section and the scanning optical system are provided in one housing.

As recognized by the Examiner, Engelhardt et al discloses a light source 3 and a fiber 4, as well as a scanning optical system (beam deflection apparatus 6).

It is respectfully pointed out, however, that according to Engelhardt et al, laser transitions are induced in the fiber 4 with the aid of light from the light source 3 such that the specimen 1 is illuminated with light from the light source 3 and with laser light induced in the fiber 4. In addition, according to Engelhardt et al, the light exit 11 of the fiber 4 acts as the point light source of the microscope. And the fiber 4 serves as all or a portion of the laser resonator.

Thus, the fiber 4 of Engelhardt et al generates and emits laser light, and, therefore is a part of the emitting source of the laser light of Engelhardt et al.

By contrast, according to the present invention as recited in new independent claim 23, the optical fiber merely leads the beam from the semiconductor laser diode and (as described in the specification of the present application) allows the astigmatic difference component to be eliminated from the laser beam. That is, according to the claimed present invention, the optical fiber is not a part of the generation of the laser beam, in the manner of Engelhardt et al.

In addition, it is respectfully pointed out that Engelhardt et al does not disclose, teach or suggest that the light source section and the scanning optical system are provided in one housing, as recited in new independent claim 23.

Mandella et al, moreover, discloses an angled-dual-axis confocal scanning system (300, 500, 550, 600, 650), an angled-dual-axis confocal scanning module (400, 501, 551, 601, 651), and an angled-dual-axis confocal scanning microscope (200, 250, 301, 401). According to Mandella et al, each apparatus has one (not a plurality) light source (302, 502, 553, 604, 654) and an optical fiber (103, 503, 555, 603, 605) that transmits light into the angled-dual-axis confocal scanning head (201), the angled-dual-axis confocal scanning microscope (301, 351, 401) or the angled-dual-axis confocal scanning module (501, 551, 601, 651).

It is respectfully submitted, however, that Mandella et al also does not disclose, teach or suggest that the light source

section and the scanning optical system are provided in one housing, as recited in new independent claim 23.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that even if Engelhardt et al were combinable with Mandella et al in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the above described structural features (whereby the optical fiber leads the laser beam from the semiconductor laser diode to the scanning optical system, and whereby the light source section and the scanning optical system are provided in one housing) and the above described advantageous effect (whereby the astigmatic difference component is eliminated from the laser beam) of the present invention as recited in new independent claim 23 would still not be achieved or rendered obvious.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that new independent claim 23, and claims 24-36 depending therefrom, all clearly patentably distinguishes over Engelhardt et al and Mandella et al, taken singly or in combination, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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